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Chatsworth, CA 91311
November 22, 2002

Marlene H. Dortch
Commission's Secretary
Office of the Secretary
The Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington D.C. 20554
RE: MB Docket No. 02-277
re: The Biennial ownership review

Dear Commissioners:

I am writing to comment on the media ownership rules. There are two modifications that I would like taken that I think would promote diversity of views: one is to expand the rule that requires "broadcasters to provide political candidates access to their facilities under certain conditions," to include all the candidates which qualify for the ballot. In the last two presidential elections, Ralph Nader received very little if any press. In 1996, he was on PBS (Fall 1996, Life and Times) once. In 2000, he was on several shows, on various major networks such as Meet the Press, Politically Incorrect, etc., but was not included in the debates and therefore people did not broadly hear his views. As is your stated mission "viewpoint diversity" would be served by providing that any aired debates of candidates must include all candidates qualified for the ballot. The supreme court's statement which you included in your document, that "The First Amendment...rests on the assumption that the widest possible dissemination of information from diverse and antagonistic sources is essential to the welfare of the public.", would support the inclusion of diverse candidates for president, and other national offices in the national debates.

The second change that I would like to see, also would promote diversity but it does address content, as your document states you no longer do. It is the reinstatement of the fairness doctrine. the limitation of not "addressing content," is a limitation that seems to make meeting the requirement of serving the public interest, nearly impossible. It prevents you from addressing whether a station serves the public and thereby meets their public service requirement. While I understand concerns in limiting free speech, and the difficulty of reviewing aired content of editorials, still there is a need to consider whether the content serves us well. When the fairness doctrine was in effect, in the early 80's and before, when you watched an editorial on the news you would hear an opinion and then an opposing opinion. This rule promoted the diversity of views that your commission takes as its touchstone in the most essential and critical way. It is my hope that your commission could consider reinstating this rule, or modifying a rule where this requirement might be added.

Fox is one of the stations which I take issue with their public service provision. The views of "O'Reilly" aired on channel 11 in my area and on cable on Fox News, is so extreme that his response to the tragedy of 9-11, (the week of 9-13-02, O'Reilly Factor) was to reiterate the republican wish list including drilling in ANWR (The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge) which had nothing to do with that tragic event. The reinstatement of the fairness doctrine would require that they balance their programming and include some other views that are opposed to such measures. It would allow and encourage the American people to think for themselves and I feel that it would encourage people to participate in our society by voting, and by other means. When the content of the airwaves is the drivel that it currently is it is hard to see how

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anyone could think that most stations are providing a public service. Fox news also suppressed the story about Bovine growth hormone causing cancer. I heard the reporters who were researching it in person at a conference (Beyond Biodevastation, 2001) last year, and this is information, that would have served the public well. I found out about it several years later, after the milk in store shelves had been widely affected by this substance. The reporters had discovered the information before this substance was ever imposed on the public.

During elections advertising from both major parties, is full of inaccuracies. We don't hear significant information telling us the views and stands of the people we are expected to vote for. Each media station can promote their own views without a counteracting view being required. These are the issues that I feel need to be addressed in order for the media to provide public service. One of the elements of the FCC code that could be reinstated that would address this would be to reinstate the fairness doctrine. The fairness doctrine promoted free speech while regulating content to some degree. It required that when a station aired an opinion it had to air as well a dissenting point of view. While I understand that the document states that it is not addressing content, I don't think that the question of whether the media provides a public service can be adequately considered without addressing content. And as we saw when the fairness doctrine was in place, regulating content does not have to interfere with free speech, it can promote it. Without allowing people to hear full stories, from more than one point of view, the opinions of the few and wealthy are constantly being aired while the concerns of the many are ignored. When the news about candidates gives us soundbites that tell us nothing but why we should not vote for one person or another, how can it be legitimately said that the media provides a public service?

I understand that both of these comments address content. but I again note that you are considering whether the media is providing a public service, and since what the media primarily provides is information, that service cannot be fairly evaluated without considering content.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this matter of such great importance to us all.

Sincerely,

Theresa Brady